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A

LETTER

TO

W. KINGSBURY, OF SOUTHAMPTON, M. A.

IN ANSWER TO HIS

Apology for Village Preachers;

AND HIS

ANIMADVERSIONS

ON A PART OF

An Appeal to the People.

BY BRIAN MONCKHOUSE.

“One of the most disgusting strokes, in the Puritanical character of the times, was, *gentle language and humble cant* in the midst of *treason*; and their *flattery* to their Prince, while they were attempting to *dethrone* and *destroy* him.”

Goldsmith's History of England, vol. ii. p. 371, 372.

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A LETTER, &c.

SIR,

THE "APPEAL to the PEOPLE," on which you have made some severe animadversions, (how justly, we shall see, as we pass on,) I have read more than once; and cannot say, but I approve of the time, at which that production appeared, as well as the manner, in which, generally speaking, it is drawn up. It appears to me to have been the intention of the Writer, first, to expose to the people the weakness of the Dissenters' principal objections to conformity; and, secondly, to put them upon their guard, at this eventful crisis, against any

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political designs, they may be desirous, either from their own private principles, or from the interposition of foreign agents, of executing under the cloak of religion.

The first thing, which strikes my mind, in considering your Apology, which, as a composition, is written with great skill and judgment, is the length of time, which has elapsed, since the beginning of the controversy, before its publication. Two months and upwards, is a long period for a man, who has pretensions to ability, a reputed leader and a principal also of any particular sect of Dissenters, to be employed in producing a pamphlet of fifty pages in its defence. But, as I mean not to reproach you for any temporary stagnation of ideas, or to carp at trifles, I will confine my observations to the nature of your Apology and the justness of your animadversions: for, surely, after you have taken so much time, in examining authorities, and drawing up the materials, one might reasonably expect, at least, correctness and truth.

At the beginning of your Preface, by way of apologising for the great "notice you have taken of an Anonymous pamphlet," you desire, it may be "considered, that the things, which
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have been so *broadly spoken* by its Author, will probably be *insinuated* by more able, and even *excellent* men." But let me ask you; if men, who excel others, will insinuate such things, as are broadly spoken by the gentleman alluded to, will not their insinuation prove the conviction of their minds, as to the truth of what they insinuate; and is it not, therefore, a complete justification of the broad language of the Appeal? Will it not prove, at the same time, which you certainly did not intend, the inferiority of excellent men to the Author of the Appeal, in a degree, proportionate to the superiour value of ingenuousness and candour over disguise and dissimulation? But, that *excellent* men should be deemed capable of *dark insinuation*, and *oblique calumny*, is not very intelligible in point of sense. Should they be "unacquainted also with the proceedings and motives of village preachers," *excellent* men will not insinuate a charge against the patriotism of their proceedings, or the purity of their motives. Your ideas on this subject, Sir, I must say, appear a little confused.

“ With the controversy between the church of England and the Dissenters, though so much enlarged upon by the Appellant,” you say, “ your

inclination led you not to meddle;" for this good reason, I humbly presume, because the arguments, brought by this Appellant, whom you affect not much to value, as an adversary, appeared to you irrefutable. As you have made only a small part of the Appeal so much the subject of your animadversion, as to occupy a place in almost every page, you cannot have so humble an opinion of your Antagonist, as you would wish us to believe. Nor does it "appear, that he knows very little of the grounds and reasons of your dissent." For, the grounds and reasons, against which he has brought arguments, are stated by him, (p. 1.) as "the principal objections, *usually* alleged." In regard to the grounds and reasons of your particular dissent, you refer your Reader to authors on your own side only. Your deficiency I will supply, by referring to authors on the other side also: for, *audi alteram partem*, is a received axiom in law.* But should you and your friends have

* See, Three Letters to a Gentleman, dissenting from the church of England, by John White, B. D.—Also, The Bishop of Worcester's Vindication of the Government, Doctrine, and Worship of the Church of England.—Also, A Letter to the Protestant dissenting Ministers, who lately solicited parliament for further relief, 1772.

other grounds and reasons of your dissent, than those, contained in Towgood's Letters, let us know, what they are; and, I doubt not, should your minds be open to conviction, and you sincere and true men, but you will soon be satisfied of their insufficiency to justify a separation.

The Author of the Appeal, you have said, "frequently makes contempt and abuse supply the place of argument." But what language shall we apply to the Author of the Apology, who, a little farther on, says; "the persons, who use *modes* of worship, *most* approved among all denominations, are little better than *machines*?" Is this charity? Is this that language of brotherly love, which you recommend? Or, is it not the same species of abuse and calumny, which you pretend to reprobate in your opponent? And yet you say in the next sentence, "I have endeavoured to watch and pray against an improper spirit!" I am sorry, Sir, your watchings and prayers have produced such bad fruit.

"Fain would you persuade yourself (p. 8.) that the Author of the Appeal is not one of the *Protestant* Clergy, in the church of England:" because, suspecting the purity of your intentions,

tions, he has given his *opinion only*, from the past and present conduct of your brethren, that your "real object is not religious, but political; and that this object leads you to alienate the attachment of the people to the established church, as the ground-work and foundation of some secret design in the field of politics." This you have called "a scheme *just hatched*, and sufficiently diabolical and hypocritical to have disgraced the ancient Jesuits." But, let us examine, how far history will justify these severe animadversions; and whether a similar scheme and similar conduct were not hatched and adopted by your Puritanical ancestors.

The History of England, abridged by Goldsmith from the works chiefly of Rapin, Carte, Smollett, and Hume, has been referred to by your opponent, on account of its admitted strict impartiality. You have justly observed, (p. 26.) "it was the fashion and spirit of the times, for forty years after the death of Charles I., for the different parties to draw each other's characters, with all the extravagance of line and colouring, which prejudice and the force of passion could, with any appearance of probability, mingle together and lay on." To Goldsmith, therefore,

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as to a man, who lived more, than one hundred years, after the transactions of that period, and destitute of "prejudice and passion," let us refer this, and every other point at issue between us, respecting the truth of historical facts. To this proposal, if an honest man, as, I hope, you are, you will most readily accede.

Goldsmith's Reign of Charles I. I have lately read, and read attentively, and do therefore deny, that "this scheme was *first hatched*" by the Author of the Appeal. That historian writes; *
 "The *Puritans* in Scotland were *republicans in principle*, as well as *those in England*: and they only wished to see *the Bishops first humbled*, in order to make a more successful attack upon unguarded monarchy. The republican party in the present parliament resolved to destroy *monarchy*; and *began* their operations by a resolution to attack *episcopacy*, which was one of the strongest bulwarks of the royal power." All your affected concern, therefore, "for the honour of the Protestant Clergy," and your coarse observations upon this passage are entirely thrown away, and very much impair your credit, as an Author.

* Vol. ii. p. 368, 384, 385.

Whether you were really ignorant of this circumstance, or only pretended ignorance, is equally censurable.—Having detected the falseness of your animadversions on this passage, I will leave you to make your reflections upon it.

Your Adversary recommends to *ignorant* people “implicitly to rely on those ministers, who are legally established to instruct them.” Implicitly, you have marked in Italics; in order to prove, that it is “strongly scented with *Popery*.” Suppose a man, who is ignorant of the nature of medicine, attacked by a violent disorder; or another, involved in a law suit, and wanting the advice of council; would they not act the part of madmen, where a physician is called in, or a lawyer consulted, not to rely *implicitly* on their directions and advice? How much more so, when the disorder affects, not the corporal, but the spiritual part of man! Those, who have been educated in any particular branch of science, are justly supposed most competent to advise. To whom, therefore, should the ignorant and unenlightened apply for spiritual direction, but to those, whose business and inclination it is, to instruct them; and who have, like physicians and lawyers in
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our temporal concerns, been educated for that express purpose? Is not the gentleman right, therefore, in advising those people, "who through a deficiency in their education, are *incapable* of forming a decisive and correct judgment on such important subjects, *implicitly* to rely on those ministers, "who are legally established to instruct them? I will leave this question to the decision, not of you, but of the impartial world; and also, whether it partake at all of the nature of *Popery*?

The next passage, which you have quoted from the Appeal, to make the subject of your animadversion, states, that "the very dregs of the people, you have shewn yourselves anxious and indefatigable to convert: men, possessed of no property, and of understandings, weak and unprincipled: thoughtless in the common concerns of life, and without any fixed opinion." Such men, as these, "it must be admitted," would prove, as your Opponent says, *in case* of a political convulsion, or of political designs, "pliant and able instruments under the direction of an ambitious and designing faction." The meaning of this passage you seem, either to have misunderstood, or to have misrepresented

sented. It appears to me, and must, I think, appear the same to impartial people, that the Author intended to mean, that the dregs of the people you were anxious and indefatigable not to instruct, conscientiously, in the way of salvation, as you affect to receive it; but to convert to your own private way of thinking, in opposition to the established Church, on things religious; and that after you have secured them in your religious persuasion, you will, at proper time gradually unfold to them your political tenets, and political plans, also; (for such he seems to think you have, grounding his opinion upon this your present conduct, and upon the past conduct of your ancestors;) and that such men will *then* prove “pliant and able instruments, under the direction of an ambitious and designing faction.” “Their souls are certainly as precious, as those of the rich in this world. They are not despised;” but considered as proper objects of religious attention; and are instructed in every parish in this kingdom, without the intrusion of uninformed and pragmatical men, ‘whose own the sheep are not,’ in the knowledge of salvation, and
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urged to flee from the wrath to come." (p. 11.)

Your brethren, whom you mention, as being "sent forth, though not ministers, into such places," are, I suppose, some of the "Tailors, Cabinet-makers, Shoemakers, Cobblers, Bakers, Blacksmiths, &c." These men, you affirm, (p. 14.) "have been *favoured* with the knowledge and *power* of religion." By your introducing the words, "*favoured* with the *power* of religion," we are led to imagine, that you meant, they are favoured with the gift, either of inspiration, or of performing miracles, or of both. This equivocal sentence, therefore, I think, it becomes you to clear up and explain.

What you have represented, as the employment of these people, is not an irreligious employment, if your statement be correct: nor is it in itself "very formidable." But having only your *ipse dixit* for the truth of it, and having already detected you in one manifest error, and as I shall, very soon, detect you in more, we have reason to entertain doubts.

"Where regular and professional men are wanting and negligent," you have endeavoured, figuratively, (p. 13, 14.) to enforce "the propriety

priety of employing occasional practitioners," or, in other words, (still preserving the beauty of the figure,) empiricks in medicine; "who understand," as well as can be understood by illiterate "*Tailors, Cabinet-makers, Shoemakers, Cobblers, Bakers, and Blacksmiths,*" "the disease and cure of human nature." But where regular and professional men are *not* wanting, or are *not* negligent, I ask you, in the name of common sense, would you desire to employ those, whom you finely term, "occasional practitioners?" Who knows not, that *quacks* kill more, than they cure? All your arguments, in favour of village preaching, do therefore, according to your own alleged principles, immediately fall to the ground, where the national Clergy reside in their respective parishes; or are not negligent in their professional employment. Your hypothetical propositions, "*if* I have found a medicine, *if* I see others sick, *if* there be no suitable help at hand, no skilful doctor in the village," have no force, where there *is* suitable help at hand; where there *is* a skilful doctor in the village. In these cases, which you call, "*ordinary* cases," you admit, you "have nothing to plead in favour of an uneducated

cated irregular ministry." It is in *extraordinary* cases only, therefore, we have your own words for saying, you are an advocate for it. Here you contradict yourself; by admitting, that the Clergy are neither wanting, nor negligent in their duty, but on *extraordinary* occasions. For, you have before told us, (p. 10.) that "consideration beheld *multitudes* in our neighbouring villages and forests, who were far from any means of instruction; living without Christ, without hope, without God in the world." You have admitted the attention of the established Clergy to their official duties, *extraordinary* cases excepted, and yet are an apologist for village preaching *in general*!

But is it, *truly and in fact*, as you, (p. 31.) and your coadjutor, Mr. Clift,* have positively averred, on the honour of your sacred profession, that your "village teachers go, for the most part, into places, where there are *no* parish churches, or where the services are *seldom* performed, or at *uncertain hours*, which the parishioners are not apprised of, or in the *most*

* See Clift's Incidental Letter to the Bishop of Salisbury, August 9, 1798, p. 4.

curfory and *hasty* manner;" and that you "have never interfered, wherever a zealous minister has been found?" I am sorry to impeach the truth of your declarations. But I feel myself obliged to ask, if it be not generally known to the whole kingdom, and notorious to the whole neighbourhood of Salisbury, that your preachers have endeavoured to establish themselves, *indiscriminately*, in every village, which would receive them; not considering, whether its Minister were attentive to his duty or not; not considering, whether there were parish churches; whether the services were seldom performed; or at uncertain hours; or in the most *curfory* manner? Nay, so far did their boldness carry them, during the last year only, that an itinerant blacksmith in Salisbury, and some others, dared week after week, and month after month, to intrude themselves among the flock of the Reverend Dean and his Curate; the former of whom does, for *eight or nine months* in the year, and the latter does, *constantly* reside in the midst of them. And surely, neither you, nor Mr. Clift will affirm, that the Dean of Salisbury, is an *inattentive* minister; or that the divine service of his church is *seldom* performed;

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or at *uncertain hours*; or in the *most cursory and hasty manner*. You cannot affirm this; because the direct contrary is known to be fact. But did I say, you *cannot* affirm this? You may, Sir, with as much truth and strictness affirm this, as affirm the preceding quotation. When a man is *determined* to justify his cause, right or wrong, he is sure, in the latter case, to commit some blunder, which betrays the weakness of it. Nor will the falseness of his assertions always escape detection by their boldness. Had Mr. Clift only made this unfounded declaration, it might have been passed over without comment. But when the same thing is insisted upon so often, as *positive facts* not only by him, but by you also, who consider yourself, it is said, the chief of your sect, in this district, and have undoubtedly just pretensions to ability, it may, were it to remain uncontradicted, and the contradiction proved, be believed by some people to be true. I am almost tempted to say, which I am not at all desirous of saying, that it betrays a premeditated design on your parts to deceive.

But this is not the only false statement, your plausible Apology has attempted to impose upon
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the world. You ask; (p. 17, 18.) "Can worldly gain be their object? The Appellant has indeed asserted, 'that these men do actually, at this moment, receive a salary from an association of members, formed for that purpose.'— I call upon him to prove his assertion. In the mean while, I *pledge* myself with the public, that it is *entirely groundless*." I do not pretend to be acquainted with the sources of information, which the Author of the Appeal is possessed of; but out of your own mouth, and out of the mouth of Mr. Clift, will I convict you. I will prove from your own words, that such an assertion is *not* entirely groundless; but that your positive statement *must* be false.

That it is not entirely groundless, is clear: for you say, in the second sentence immediately following; (again contradicting yourself,) that the village preachers, "who are poor," meaning, I suppose, the journeymen Tailors, Cobblers, Bakers, and Blacksmiths, "*are allowed their expences, when they leave home.*" But "from what fund can it arise," you triumphantly exclaim? Mr. Clift shall answer you himself. "The profits, arising from the sale of this Tract, will be applied in aid of the COUNTRY FUND, *for the*

*the encouragement of village preaching.** That Mr. Clift has "full information" on this subject, he himself has told us in his Letter; (p. 4.) "having been acquainted with almost every plan formed, and, more or less, taken an active part in the work; ever since the year 1793." "From what funds could arise salaries for fifty men from one place only," is a question, answered by yourself in a preceding sentence: that "some of those, who go into the villages, though not rich, are reputable, as to their outward circumstances, and would scorn a fee; and that those, who are poorer, are only allowed their expences, when they leave home." It requires not, therefore, "immense revenues." Your associated minister, Mr. Clift, has told in his before-mentioned Letter, (p. 5, 6.) "that the expence is but trifling, in comparison to what your Lordship may suppose;" and that "what additional expence is incurred, our more regular churches willingly contribute to supply."

From these extracts and these observations I have clearly proved, that the assertion, quoted

* See the Advertisement of Clift's Incidental Letter to the Bishop of Sarum, inserted by his own authority in the Salisbury Journal, October 8, last.

from the Appeal, is *not entirely groundless*; though you have had the rashness to *pledge* yourself to the public, that it is entirely groundless. We may, from this instance of your veracity, form some opinion, how far your other allegations are to be credited.

With the *precise* number of Itinerants, who leave Salisbury every Sabbath, it appears to me, that the Author of the Appeal is not acquainted. For, in one place, (p. 17.) he states it to be between fifty and sixty; and, in another, (p. 40.) he confines it to fifty; not pledging either the learned Bishop's, or his own authority for the truth of it, but resting the whole on *information* only. However it signifies very little, *what* the precise number is; whether it be one or two more, or one or two less, than fifty. Nor do I believe, that it is accurately known even to yourself, though you say, it "may be so easily disproved." For (p. 45.) you admit the possibility, that "wretches may arise so depraved, as to *assume* the itinerant character." If it may be so easily disproved, why did not you disprove it, and tell us precisely, but candidly and truly, what the number is. It is certain and indisputable, that a *very great number* of the description, contained

He has a perfect tale of his
own religion, but not of his
Catholicism

tained in the Appeal, (p. 18.) of "Tailors, Cabinet-makers, Shoemakers, Cobblers, Bakers, and Blacksmiths," does actually, on a Sabbath, fally forth under, I presume, your direction; and many of them with only your licence in their pockets.

You introduce, (p. 19.) for the second time, your Adversary's *opinion*, that your real object is not religious, but political, &c. &c.; and then descant on it with much warmth. But, surely, you are not such an enemy to the liberty of mankind, as to deny the existence of the natural right of forming an opinion. The reasons, upon which he grounds his opinion, the Author has given in an open manner, in the following words: (p. 32.) "*Such conduct, adopted under existing circumstances, and compared with their conduct in former periods of the English history, insinuates into my mind the opinion,*" &c. On the justness of his opinion he has left to the world to decide. I have not been able to discover, that he wishes to erect his opinion, "as infallible." At the same time, permit me to say, that every man, who has read his reasons, his quoted authority, and will read the reasons and authority, which I will soon produce, and

has made observations on the general conduct of many of the Dissenters, will not condemn him for having formed such an opinion; nor think, that his cautionary exhortation is altogether unreasonable. "Such villains, as he represents, enemies to our happy constitution, *are* to be found;" and though you wish (p. 20.) to see them ^{as} stripped of their odious veil, (and stripped naked too,) exposed to the insulting crowd, and punished with *his* stripes," yet I much doubt, that he will deem it prudent to gratify your wish. One would not in charity suppose from your warmth, that you felt conscious of "some deep political design;" because you have mentioned the severity of the *stripes*, which the Author of the Appeal is capable of inflicting. I have said, quoting your words, that such villains *are* to be found: one instance of which I will give; and give it upon the authority of many respectable people, neighbours of the person accused. I will give it, because the person holds, even now, a conspicuous station amongst Dissenters, is a Minister, an Author, and a Master of Arts too, Sir, as well as yourself. But were I even an "Anonymous accuser," it does not follow, that I am, on this account,

account, not to "be believed," or that I utter falsehoods. I cannot expose him more, than his conduct has exposed him "to the insulting crowd." The person alluded to, is the Rev. J—— T——, A. M.; who has for a number of years resided, and been a dissenting Minister, in a populous town, in the county of Somerset. Every one will see the propriety of my not writing his name in full language. The fact of his personal exertions among the lower class of mankind, to convert them to his own political way of thinking, hostile, as it avowedly is, to our present constitution, is known in that neighbourhood by hundreds: many of whom were present at a very severe reproof, he not long ago received, on this account, from the constituted magistrates of that town. The personal consequence to himself of this conduct was; by the loyal part of his fellow-townmen he was universally reprobated; but by his dissenting brethren no less cordially received.

From the objections, which you proleptically raise (from p. 29 to 42.) against village preaching, and answer yourself with an "infallible tone," one would suppose, that there were in this kingdom, no parish churches, no divine service,

the service, no established Clergy, to take care of souls of men, and to instruct them in the way of salvation; or, if there are men, ordained for this purpose, with suitable provision, that they are all, without distinction, as it is broadly hinted, (p. 34.) the very reverse of what they ought to be; that they are all "profane, and lewd, and vain, and gay; that they drink with the drunken, swear with the profane, or encourage swearing or sneering at godliness by their countenance; that they consume all their precious time in vain amusements; that they are negligent of their flock, are proud and haughty, and never converse with them about their eternal concerns." And, on this presumption, false as it undoubtedly is, you ground your *Apology for Village Preaching*.

"The truth of the Scriptures is proved," and proved, I hope, "in plain language; the poison of infidelity is endeavoured to be checked, the pernicious principles of PAINÉ are warned against," by the *national* Clergy. They "show the inhabitants the misery of a fallen state, the odiousness and danger of vice, the gulf of eternal destruction, which is before them; and urge them to flee to Him, who only can deliver from the

the wrath to come;" (p. 31.) and want not the intrusion of Aliens and Pragmatists, to raise divisions, and to create jealousies among the flock. If you, and your brethren, "love the doctrine of the established Church," as you say; (p. 30.) if "you are satisfied with her discipline; if many of you admire, and sometimes adopt, parts of her Liturgy," why, in the name of peace, do you separate from her communion; and endeavour to establish a Church within a Church? Why are you so restless, and discontented with your condition? And, why do not you quietly submit to the rules and ceremonies of that Church, whose doctrine you confessedly love; whose discipline you are satisfied with; and parts of whose Liturgy you admire and adopt? If you "are not such bigots, as to confine salvation within the circle of a sect," (p. 53.) you have hardly the candour to admit, there is any goodness, but in ministers of your own persuasion. They only seem, in your eyes, (p. 33.) to answer Saint Paul's description of a Pastor; (1 Tim. iii, 2—7.) "*blameless, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt (i. e. able and willing) to teach, not given to wine, no striker, nor greedy of filthy lucre, but patient,*

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patient, not a brawler, not covetous; one, that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity; not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil. Moreover he must have a good report of them, which are without, lest he fall into reproach, and the snare of the devil."

In regard to Bishop Jewel's Apology for the Church of England, quoted by you, (p. 49, 50.) I have only to observe, that, whenever you can prove, you have the same substantial reasons for separating from our established Church, as our Reformers had, for withdrawing from the Roman Church, and can prove yourselves, as virtuous and exemplary, as "Christ and his Apostles," then, and not before, shall the Bishop's Apology, be admitted, as being in point. Any body of men, arraigned at the bar of justice for treason, may say, as you have done, (in the words of Bishop Jewel: "They roar out in all places, that we are hereticks; that we are wicked men; that we despise all good actions; that our business and design is, the subverting monarchies and kingdoms," &c. But it does not hence follow, that they are innocent of the charge.

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With respect to the Clergy of the establishment, you say, (p. 51.) "I hope, I have said nothing throughout these sheets, disrespectful of those, who fulfil their ministry." It appears not to me, that you have *uniformly* admitted, that the Clergy of the establishment do any of them, fulfil their ministry. For though you admit in one place, there are "many worthy ministers and others both in and out of the establishment, who long for the salvation of men," yet in other places you censure the national Clergy indiscriminately; and it is upon the assumed principle, that they do *not* fulfil their ministry, all your arguments, in favour of village preaching, entirely rest. And here (p. 51.) you admit it only by implication, and with a very ill grace: for a few sentences afterwards, (p. 52.) you indirectly reproach them *all*, without discrimination, for neglect of duty. Nay, you even point out the precise nature of their neglect; forgetting what you recommended; (p. 48.) "never let us speak against the *whole* body of the Clergy, and the *whole* church, because of the faults of *some* of her faithless and ungodly sons; and even, when we have opportunity, let us *not* wantonly publish their failings."

Your

Your note (in p. 53.) I should, more properly perhaps, leave for your great Adversary to encounter, as being better qualified for the undertaking. But, should he not think fit to answer your Apology, or should he deem this Answer sufficient, I desire to make one observation. The Church of Rome we consider not a *sound* part of the Catholic Church. We separated from her communion, because she had corrupted the leading principles of religion; and required of her members coincidence with those corruptions. No church is a *sound* part of the Catholic Church, which maintains the doctrines of image worship, invocation of saints, transubstantiation, pardons, indulgences, sacrifice of the mass, merit, supererogation, &c. &c.; because such doctrines plainly contradict the Holy Scriptures. On the justness of this cause of our separation, as well as the truth of her own doctrines, the Roman Church, doubtless, "took upon herself to be the infallible judge." But the Author of the Appeal, to the observation, (p. 43.) that no man can innocently withdraw from the English national Church without a just cause, adds, and adds truly, what you have omitted, that "no cause
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can be called just, which has not, for its base, *a violation of the divine law.*" And to this sentence, I see not, with what propriety you, Dissenters, can object. For, you cannot live in communion, as you ought, with the whole Christian Church, without actual communion with some part of it. Your duty is, therefore, to ascertain, whether that part of the Catholic Church, wherein you live, be so sound, so consistent with Scripture, that you may lawfully maintain communion with it. If it be sound and consistent you are bound to do so, under the peril of *schism* from the Catholic Church. If it be not sound, and not consistent with Scripture, your separation is praise-worthy; nay, you would sin, were you not to separate.

(As you have (p. 27, 28, 23.) made a long and eloquent declaration of your *uniform* and *invariable* attachment to the constitution of this country, and accused the Author of the Appeal of uttering "as gross a *libel* and as *palpable a falsehood*, as ever dropped from the pen of an enemy," when he said, that you have "uniformly displayed hostility to regal government," and that "all the distressful circumstances and tragical events, which marked the reign of
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the unhappy Charles I., are chargeable to the Dissenters, as their principal and active promoters;" let us see, how far the testimony of the impartial historian, quoted in the Appeal, will support your accusation; and to *whom* the crime of uttering "*palpable falsehoods*," and things, "*totally destitute of facts*," is more properly due; to the Author of the Appeal, or to *yourself*. That the public may be able to decide this question with justice, I will, in a regular manner, produce, first, the words of the Appeal; next, your animadversions on them; and lastly, the testimony of the historian.

"Who were the principal and active promoters of the rebellion, and all the distressful circumstances and tragical events, which marked the reign of that unhappy prince: (Charles I.) in which brother daily contended with brother, and the arm of the son was uplifted against the parent of his existence? Who subverted, in that contest, the first principles of the constitution, and brought the unfortunate Charles to the block? Who, after these successful attempts, not only seated Cromwell upon his vacated throne, under the fictitious denomination of Protector, but also established, upon an immoveable

moveable base, his usurped authority? To all these questions the same general answer may be given; the Dissenters." (Appeal, p. 34, 35.)

"*Totally destitute of facts*, to support his malignant invectives, against the Dissenters, here he" (the Author of the Appeal) "seems to triumph, as if sure of his prey. He puts question after question, and answers them himself, with as infallible a tone, as if no one dared, or was able, to say a syllable in defence of the culprits. But had he been a little deeper read in history, than a boy at school, had he *been disposed* to have gone a little farther in his enquiries into the affair, or had he reasoned a little closely on it, he might soon have seen, how *improbable*, as well as *untrue* it is, that so small a part of the community should have been able to bring about such mighty changes. As to the unhappy civil war, which distracted and rent the country, for so many years, this was waged between *the King* and *the Parliament*. But was the Long parliament composed of Dissenters! No?" (Apology, p. 23.)

Before I produce the authority of the historian, let me set you right in a few things, which you seem not fully to understand. You
say;

say; "how *improbable* it is, that so small a part of the community should have been able to bring about such mighty changes." Do you not know, that a *small* part of the community, when in possession of *power*, as the Dissenters then were, are able to bring about mighty changes? Or, will you deny, that the Dissenters of that period were in possession of power? That they actually filled all the principal civil, ecclesiastical, and military offices, I will soon prove.—The civil war, you say, was waged between the King and the Parliament. But was it not carried on by the *adherents* of the King, and the *adherents* of the Parliament; which included the whole nation? Your manner of expressing yourself seems to deny this truth.

Let us now receive the evidence of the Historian.—"We are apt to impute the disorders of those times rather to *civil* motives of *establishing liberty*, which, in *reality*, made but a *very subordinate* consideration. (p. 361.)*—Since the times of Elizabeth a new religious sect had been gaining ground in England; which, from the supposed purity of their manners, were called

* Goldsmith's History of England, vol. 2.

PURITANS. Of all other sects, this was the most *dangerous* to *monarchy*: and the *tenets* of it more calculated to support that imagined *equality*, which obtains in a state of nature. (p. 360.)

—The PURITANS in Scotland were *republicans* in principle, as well as those in *England*; and they only wished to see the *Bishops* first humbled, in order to make a more successful attack upon *unguarded monarchy*. (p. 368.)—The pulpits,

delivered over to the *Puritanical* preachers, whom the Commons, (the *Long* parliament) arbitrarily placed in *all the considerable churches*, resounded with *faction*. (p. 378.)—The *republican* party in the *present parliament* resolved to

destroy *monarchy*, and began their operations by a resolution to attack *episcopacy*, which was one of the strongest bulwarks of the royal power.

(p. 384, 385.)—Faulkland perceived the design of the parliament, (the *Long* parliament,) to overturn the *religion* and *constitution* of his country.

(p. 399.)—The *Puritans* demanded a total abolition of the *episcopacy* and all church ceremonies.

The parliament, (the *Long* parliament,) was obstinately bent upon removing the order of *Bishops*, and began with the foremost of the number.

The death of LAUD was followed by a total alteration

alteration of the ceremonies of the church. The Liturgy was abolished, the day he died. (p. 402, 403.)—The church of England was, in all respects, brought to a conformity to the *Puritanical* establishment. From the moment the *Puritans* began to be apparently united, and ranked under one denomination of *Presbyterians*, they began to divide into fresh parties. One part of the House, (the *Long parliament*,) was composed of *Presbyterians*, strictly so called: the other, though a minority, of *Independents*. The difference between these two sects would be hardly worth mentioning, did not *their religious opinions influence their political conduct*. The *Independent* sect aspired at the abolition not only of all *monarchy*, but of all *subordination*. They formed a majority in the army, made up chiefly of the lowest of the vulgar. The Royalists endeavoured to throw a *ridicule* on this *fanaticism*, without being sensible, how much reason they had to apprehend its *dangerous consequences*. (p. 404, 405.)—Never was a more singular army assembled than that, which now drew the sword in the parliamentary cause. The officers exercised the office of chaplains; and, during the intervals of action, instructed their

troops by sermons, prayers, and exhortations. Rapturous ecstasies supplied the place of study and reflection; and while they kindled, as they spoke, they ascribed their own warmth to a *descent of the spirit from Heaven*. The private soldiers employed their vacant hours in prayer, in perusing the Holy Scriptures, in ghostly conferences. When marching to the field of battle, the hymn and the ejaculation mixed their notes with those of the trumpet." (p. 407.)—"The civil war was now over, and the parliament had now no enemy to fear, except those very troops, by which they had extended their overgrown authority. The division between the Independents and the Presbyterians became more apparent. The *majority in the House*, (*the Long parliament*) were of the *Presbyterian* sect; but the *majority of the army* were staunch *Independents*. At the head of *this sect* was CROMWELL. (p. 413.)—The very same conduct, which had formerly been used with success by the parliament against their sovereign, was now put in practice by the army against the parliament. Cromwell began by accusing eleven members of the House, (*the Long parliament*), as guilty of high treason, and

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enemies

enemies to the army. The members accused, were the leaders of the *Presbyterian* party; the very men, who had prescribed such rigorous measures to the King, and now, in their turn, were threatened with popular resentment. The citizens of London saw an oppressive parliament now subjected to a more oppressive army. (p. 415, 416, 417.)—The *Independent* army, at the head of whom was CROMWELL, on one hand, and the *Presbyterians* in the name of either House, on the other hand, treated separately with the King in private. (p. 419.)—As soon as the army had gained a complete victory over the House of Commons, the *Independents* began to abate of their expressions of duty and respect. (p. 420.)—The parliament saw no other method of destroying military power, but to depress it by the kingly. But all was now too late; for the rebellious army, (the *Independent* army,) began to demand vengeance on the King.—The next day Colonel Pride, at the head of two regiments, blockaded the House, (the *Long* parliament,) and seized in the passage *forty-one* members of the *Presbyterian* party. Above a *hundred and sixty* members *more* were excluded: and none were allowed to

to enter, but the most furious and determined of the *Independents*. Nothing now remained, after the constitution had been destroyed, and the religion of the country had been abolished, but to *murder the King*." (p. 425, 426.)

During the usurpation of Cromwell, we find* that "the persons, pitched upon by him for exercising the important trust of a Parliament, were the lowest, meanest, and the most ignorant among the Citizens, and the *very dregs of the Fanatics*. (p. 15.)—This shadow of a Parliament being dissolved, *the Officers*, by *their own authority*, declared Cromwell, *Protector* of the common-wealth of England. (p. 17.)—The standing army (the *Independent* army) was alone sufficient for Cromwell's purpose; for, while possessed of that instrument, he *could mould the rest of the constitution to his pleasure* at any time." (p. 19.)—After the death of Cromwell, "the Officers being left to themselves, determined to replace the remnant of the Old Parliament, which had beheaded the King. This was called the *good old cause*, from their *attachment to Republican principles*. (p. 31.)—The PRESBY-

* Goldsmith's History of England, vol. iii.

TERIANS had long been *so barrasted by the falsehood, the folly, and the tyranny of their INDEPENDENT coadjutors, that they longed for nothing so ardently, as the King's restoration.* These, therefore, joined to the Royalists, formed a decisive majority on every contest; and without noise, but with steady resolution, determined to call back the King. (p. 39.)—When the Act of Uniformity passed, after the restoration of Charles II., above *two thousand* of the *Presbyterian* Clergy relinquished their cures in *one day.*" (p. 49.)*

I thought it necessary to be thus copious in my quotations, in order to enable the public to form a decisive and correct judgment; that they may not be led away, by the boldness of your assertions, to believe, that the Author of the Appeal, who is, I presume, what he has professed, a Clergyman in the diocese of Salisbury, has published "*gross libels, and palpable falsehoods;*" for it is now pretty clear, to *whom* these charges may, with more propriety, and with greater strictness, be applied. I have *proved* every word, which that gentleman has asserted;

* See the whole Reign of Charles I.

and *more*. I have *proved*, that the Dissenters *were* "the principal and active promoters of the unhappy civil war, and all the distressful circumstances, and tragical events, which marked the reign of the unfortunate Charles." I have *proved*, that the Dissenters "subverted, in that contest, the first principles of the constitution, and brought the unhappy King to the block." I have *proved*, that, "after these successful attempts, they not only seated Cromwell upon his vacated throne, under the fictitious denomination of Protector, but also established, upon an immoveable base, his usurped authority." And, though you *deny* the fact, I have *proved*, that the *Long* Parliament *was* composed of Dissenters; and that "the common notion, among prejudiced and ignorant people, that the Dissenters have been the authors of former calamities, is *not* groundless." (Apology, p. 25, 26.) They *have* been the "authors of former calamities," and may, for aught I know, though I do not charge them with it, be "still plotting new ones." I have *proved*, that "the whole collective body" of Puritans, which was the great original stock, from which sprung forth various branches of other denominations, "*have* displayed

played the same hostility to regal government; that whatever difference of opinion has arisen among them, on the subject of religion, they *have* been united in the same inveterate hatred, against regal, as well as episcopal government;" and that, to obtain their political objects, they first "alienated the attachment of the people to the established church, as the *ground-work and foundation* of their attacks upon unguarded Monarchy." Since you have produced (p. 25.) "a zealous Churchman" to affirm, "the tragedy of the King's death was at the contrivance of *the army*," the *majority* of that army I have *proved*, consisted of *Independents*. What *were* the religious and political sentiments of the Independent sect, during the *reign of Charles I.* we have been told by the AUTHOR of the APPEAL, from the same authority. What *are*, in the *present day* their sentiments on these subjects, we would wish to hear from *you*, their reputed provincial LEADER; should any credit, after this conviction, be thought due to you. I have *proved* also, that the Dissenters of that period no sooner succeeded in their attacks upon the established Church, than they began to assault unguarded Monarchy; and their overthrow

throw of Monarchy and “ their attachment to Republican principles were called *the good old cause*.” Nor would the Presbyterians, it appears, at length, “ have ardently longed for the King’s restoration, had they not been so *barrassed by the falsehood, the folly, and the tyranny of their INDEPENDENT coadjutors*.” Well, therefore, might the Author of the Appeal call your “ hatred against regal as well as episcopal government, a permanent and fundamental principle.” If “ forty-seven of your most eminent Ministers in London signed a protest against the murder of their Sovereign, and afterwards fifty-seven of them published a *vindication* of themselves from the *unjust aspersions*,” as you affirm in your Apology, (p. 25.) it proves only *their own personal* disapprobation of that sanguinary act; and that they were *accused* of his murder by their fellow-citizens, *even at that period*.

You have said, (p. 17.) “ is it not an invasion of the prerogative of God, who judgeth the heart; as well as illiberal in a great degree; to attribute to men other motives, than those, they profess, until, by *their outward conduct*, they are convicted of insincerity?” To the truth of this affirmative question I very readily subscribe

scribe under certain limitations. But it is from *your outward conduct*, that the Author of the Appeal has (p. 32.) drawn his conclusions, respecting your political views. You have lately displayed, he there tells us, and you admit the truth of it, "uncommon exertion to proselyte the inferior members of society" to your religious persuasion. A similar line of conduct was pursued by your ancestors, at the time they intended to overthrow the constitution. They first "alienated the attachment of the people to the established Church; and then successfully attacked unguarded monarchy." It is, I repeat it, from your conduct, compared with the conduct of your ancestors, that the Author of the Appeal has inferred your present political intentions. I sincerely hope, his inference may not be realized by its execution. But in the meantime, it must be allowed, that his conclusion from the preceding premises is logically just: and his warning, the laudable exercise of a vigilant, a loyal, and a patriotic spirit. The established Clergy would scorn, I will be bold to say, to impute to any set of men motives, which their conduct does not justify. If, in the dead of night, I discover a notorious robber concealed in

in my house, is it unfair to conclude, that his designs are of a plundering nature? Should an hostile fleet appear off the British coast, and prepare to land armed men, would an Englishman be justified in not warning his countrymen of their danger, because they have not *actually* landed? Should a loaded musket, or a naked bayonet, Sir, be pointed at your own breast by a man, who had before attempted your life; he may perhaps say, I intend you no hurt; but would you believe him? Would not you put yourself in a posture of defence? You inquire, (p. 29.) “does not the established Church stand on too firm a foundation of *laws and statutes*, custom and general opinion, for the puny endeavours of our poor Itinerants to overturn her?” I will answer this question by another. Had not the established Church the same foundation of *laws and statutes*, custom and general opinion,” in the reign of Charles I., to support her; and yet that Church, together with the Monarchy, was overturned by your INDEPENDENT *ancestors*. The Royalists of that period *disregarded* and *laughed* at the Fanatics, “without being then sensible of the *dangerous consequences*” of their inattention. Very seasonably, there-

therefore, are the friends to Monarchy exhorted, at this critical juncture, to be "circumspect, vigilant, and suspicious of all your movements, both religious and political;" and to "scrutinize with a prying eye the dark designs of these insidious men." (Apology, p. 43.) We can judge what they are, and what they would be, had they the upper hand, from what they have been. You have endeavoured to make us believe, by your apparent candour, your positive assertions, your plausible statement of motives, and sophistical arguments, that your ancestors were innocent of the blood of their Sovereign; were lamb-like, harmless, sincere,* conscientious, pious men; actuated by no other motive, than of doing good to their fellow-citizens; and that their descendants, in general, are the same innocent innoxious creatures. But, having proved the falseness of your statements in one case, whether ignorantly, or designedly, is best known to yourself, we may reasonably suspect the truth of them in the other; particularly as they rest on your bare word.

Having no intention of again addressing you

* For proof of their *sincerity*, see the next and last page.

in this public manner, I will now take my leave. Suspicious of what you *may* do, from what you *have* done, the Author of the Appeal has performed, in my opinion, no more than his duty, as a loyal subject, in warning his countrymen, at this eventful period, against any political designs, you may be induced to form, in consequence of your late "numerous increase." Though you have (p. 27, 28.) been very profuse in your declarations of attachment to our constitution, and the Royal family, and I wish not to impeach your personal loyalty, as an individual; yet, I think, it becomes me, as a friend to my country, to observe, that equally profuse, in their declarations of attachment, were your Puritanical ancestors, in the reign of the unfortunate Charles; even at the time, they were plotting his destruction. No wonder then, that the Author of the Appeal should say, (p. 34.) that "your political designs it has been your adopted practice to conceal under the veil of hypocrisy." But, as you may have the presumption to deny this also, and I have no desire to continue a correspondence with you, I will prove what I have said, and the proof of it shall close my Letter:—"One of the most disgusting strokes,

strokes, in the Puritanical character of the times, was, *gentle language and bumble cant*, in the midst of *treason*; and their *flattery* to their Prince, while they were attempting to *detbrone* and *destroy* him."*

* Goldsmith's History of England, vol. ii. p. 371, 372.

I am, Sir,

Your Well-wisher.



OXFORD, Oct. 27, 1798.